Why were we Created?

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All praise is due to Allâh and may His peace and blessings be upon his last Messenger *sallallâhu 'alayhi wa sallam* and on all those who follow the path of righteousness until the last day.

We have to answer the most fundamental question that every human being asks himself at some point in his or her lifetime. Not just Muslims, but every single human being.

"Why was I created? Why am I here? What am I doing in this world? Why did God create me?"

These questions, are questions which each and everyone of us reflects on at some point during their life. We have some answers, which are given generally, but usually these answers don't satisfy us, they seem somewhat simplistic. We still wonder. "Why me? Why here?" I know all of you, generally speaking, in the back of your mind, you are saying "to worship Allâh, *khallas* (finish), what more is there to say? Why do we need to have a big long talk on why we were created, when we all know it is to worship Allâh?" But wait, if this is presented to a non-Muslim, the next logical question would be "why does Allâh want us to worship Him?" and then your stuck.

It means, in our own minds it is not really clear to us. Why did Allâh create us to worship Him?

The question, why did Allâh create us, for some people, and we have to deal with those people around us, who don't consider there to be any purpose in man's creation because he is just a product of evolution that the forces of nature have produced him, and just as we don't have apes, dogs or cows thinking about why they are here, then we don't really have to think about it either. Of course that being the basis of the philosophy of western society, that man is without purpose, then the whole issue of government, morality etc has no basis in Revelation, there is no guidance there. The product of this is of course the corruption that we are living in.

For a Muslim, when we go in to this topic, we have to find our understanding in divine revelation and not human speculation. Because human speculation has no bounds, we can imagine all kinds of things, and is any of you have studied philosophy of religion, you can see how many opinions exist about the creation of man and existence. Because of the variety of philosophies, which are out there, no one can say this one is correct or that one is incorrect, because there is no guidance behind it. No divine revelation. It is only from divine revelation that we can determine the reality of our creation, because it is Allâh who has created us and he knows the purpose of our creation. We can hardly understand ourselves, much less try to understand the essence of things. So it is for Allâh to inform us through the revelation in the *Qur'ân* and the *Sunnah* which was brought by his last Messenger *sallallâhu 'alayhi wa sallam* and the Messengers before. Now if we are to look, initially into revelation, to determine why was man created, there is a deeper question that we should be asking before that. "Why did God create?" Before we even get to man, why did god create, because man is not the greatest act of creation that we should be so focused on why man. No, because Allâh says:

> **"The creation of the Heavens and the Earth is indeed greater then the creation of mankind; yet, most of mankind know not."** [*Sûrah* Ghâfir, verse 57]

Man is not the greatest act of creation, this universe is far more complex and far more magnificent then man. So the issue of creation should then go to why create? As opposed to simply why create man?

Fundamentally, we can say that the creation is the natural consequence of the attribute of creator. Allâh is the creator. That is one of his attributes. That is what he has informed us. That being his attribute, the creator, the natural consequence or the product of this attribute is his creation.

A painter, if we are to draw a similitude on a lower level, who tells you that he is a painter, if you ask him where are his paintings and he replies I don't have any. What kind of painter is this? The concept of a painter who doesn't paint, there is some thing not quite gelling together here, of course Allâh is beyond this. But if we are to understand on the simplest level, the two go together. The perfection of a painter lies in his paintings. His quality and his ability to paint, is manifest in his paintings. And Allâh, beyond all that, as creator, this quality of creation is manifest in the creation itself. Allâh didn't create out of a need. No, the fact that he is the creator, is manifest in the creation.

Furthermore, consider the act of creation, this act, with regards to Allâh is unique. Though we use the term i.e. So and so created a table etc, actually it is in a limited sense. Human beings don't really create, they manipulate, because they can only "create" what already exists. When we make a chair or a table, we didn't create the wood, we had to take it from a tree, we didn't create the metal, which makes the screws etc, we had to melt down rocks and take the metal out. So we are not creating from nothing. We are manipulating things which Allâh has already created in to different shapes and forms which are useful to us. We call it "creation" but the real act of creation, is creation from nothing, and this is unique to Allâh alone.

This is a concept, which many people in ignorance, because they couldn't grasp the idea of creation from nothingness, it lead them to conclude that the world is Allâh. Those who say "inside of each and every atom is Allâh." And you have people, who call themselves Muslims saying this. Non-Muslims have said this before and there are Muslims who claim this. That Allâh is inside each and everything, because Allâh is the reality and everything else is fake in their interpretation. That means then, that the creation is Allâh, and Allâh is the creation. Very, very dangerous concept, which leads some of those who make this claim to say that you don't have to worship outside of yourself. Ibn Arabi, was famous for this statement, he is considered to be one of the saints, amongst the so called *Sûfî* religion. Ibn Arabi said "There is no need to worship one outside yourself, you are Allâh. It is sufficient to worship yourself." This is *Shirk*.

This concept of Allâh being within his creation, no distinction the creation and Allâh, it leads them to this shirk. Because they are unable to accept the uniqueness of Allâh's creation, they compare the act of creation by Allâh to human creation. That is, just as we manipulate, Allâh took pieces of himself and made the earth and the universe. Others will say that all human beings have inside of themselves Allâh, that there is a part of Allâh inside each and everyone of us. The whole essence, the purpose of life is for us to realize that we have part of Allâh inside of ourselves, remove the material blocks which keep us from Allâh and again become one with Allâh in what they call "*fana*". This is again a teaching of the *Sûfî* religion.

Becoming one with Allâh, returning back to Allâh in this sense. But this is in fact part of the teachings of *shirk*. Shaytân (Satan) has deluded man into this imagination. It is part of the belief of the Hindus. Nirvana, the concept that when you die, you are reborn again, and you move up in stages, each time, if you are a good boy or good girl, you go up higher and higher, until you get to the top. You know you have reached the peak, because when you die the next time you become one with the universal soul, Nirvana. That is the end of rebirth. So your whole purpose is to return and become one with God again. This is all, as I said, a product of the inability to understand the concept of creation from nothingness, which is unique to Allâh. Allâh says:

> **"There is nothing like him, and he is the hearer and seer of all."**

So when we try to interpret Allâh's creation like the way we create, then we have made Him like his

creation and it leads us ultimately to those aspects of *shirk* which I have mentioned. This is quite common amongst the Muslim world today, because when you look into the various branches of the *Sûfî* religion, where they have prescribed various acts of purification, they call it *dhikr*, exercises to torture the body through spinning and dancing. What is the purpose of this? They will tell you, to liberate the soul from this earthly body and to achieve that state of "*fana*" or "*itihâd*", a variety of names they have for it.

It is this concept, which lead al-Hallaj, many centuries ago, when he was promoting this idea, and he was put before a panel of judges questioning these concepts, which he was expressing. When they asked him to recant, to take this stuff back, he stood up, opened up his cloak and said "There is nothing inside this cloak except Allâh". So they executed him. And of course, those in the *Sûfî* religion, they have stories that when they cut his head off, it rolled around saying "Allâh, Allâh, Allâhu Akbar etc". It might have, that is Shaytân may have entered and said these things, as happened with the calf of the *Isrealites*, when the Prophet Mûsa (Moses) let Egypt and the people, after crossing the red sea, had a desire to have a god that they could see, so they made a golden calf which they began to worship. This calf was saying "moo" like the calves do. This is what convinced them that this was the real thing. We know it wasn't the calf saying this. The evil *jinn* can enter the in to physical entities, make sounds and give these impressions. So there is no problem for us to say ok, maybe when they cut of al-Hallaj's head that it said these things, because this was part of a test. If we are clear in terms of creator and creation, this is no problem for us.

Allâh is the creator and everything besides Him is His creation, which He created from nothing. It is not Him, nor is He it. This is the pure concept as taught by the Prophet *sallallâhu 'alayhi wa sallam*, his companions, and the early generations of righteous scholars, the students of the companions and those who came after them. The best of generations. That is how they understood this matter. There was no confusion in their minds. It wasn't until Islâm spread to areas like Egypt, India and Persia, areas where the Christians had already gotten into deep philosophies, trying to explain how Jesus was a man and god at the same time. When they came in to Islâm they brought it with them. This is the reality. It is not something we should necessarily condemn them for or feel is unusual. It is natural, when a person reverts to Islâm, that they will carry with them what they believed before. What has been clarified for them, of the basic principles, they accept, and they reject things, which obviously contradict. But it doesn't mean that every last thought that they have, and everything that was wrong in their philosophies, ideology and concepts will be erased. They will carry these things in with them. This is why in the later part of the Prophet's *sallallâhu 'alayhi wa sallam* life, prior to his death, when he was coming back from one of the battles, his companions asked him to set aside a tree for them, that they could hang their weapons on, like the way the pagans would hang their weapons on trees, believing that when they hung the weapons, it became super-powerful, as if some power was coming from the tree, that their shields would now block steel and their swords would cut through the enemy. Some of the companions who had newly accepted Islâm, asked the Prophet *sallallâhu 'alayhi wa sallam* to designate one for them, a special one, an Islamic one. They understood that what the pagans had, this was wrong. These were the companions of the Prophet *sallallâhu 'alayhi wa sallam* and he had to clarify it for them. He said:

> *You are like the companions of Mûsâ who asked to have the calf built.*

And he clarified for them that all of this is shirk and there is no place for it in Islâm. So if it could happen to some of the companions, then we cannot blame the generations who have come after them, who come into Islâm and carry with them some of their old ideas. What it is for us to do is to clarify.

So what we have in front of us then, is that Allâh created this universe out of nothing, and everything that is in it was created. For example:

"Allâh created all things, and he is the agent, upon which, all things depend." [*Sûrah* 39, verse 62]

This is the reality. This is stressed for us, in order for us to realize that ultimately, all good, all evil, that takes place in the world, only takes place by the permission of Allâh. Therefore we should not seek any other channels to protect ourselves from evil, or to gather for ourselves good, as people commonly do today. They will go to fortunetellers, this is big business today, all the magazines have various forms of fortunetellers like dial a horoscope etc. in a society that has lost touch with Allâh, this is what is open to them. Allâh has stressed for us that no calamity will befall us except by Allâh's permission;

"Nothing is taking place in this world except by the permission of Allâh."

And the Prophet *sallallâhu 'alayhi wa sallam* further emphasized this principle by saying;

"If the whole of mankind gathered to do some thing to help us, they could help in anything which Allâh had not already written for us. And if the whole of mankind gathered together to harm us, then they would not be able to harm with anything which Allâh had not already written for us."

Therefore what is required of us is to depend on Allâh, put our trust in Allâh. This is what we have to draw out of this attribute of Allâh being the creator. This creation exists because of that attribute. Its practical significance to us lies in putting our trust in Allâh.

There is another aspect, besides the fact that the creation exists because Allâh is the creator. We can also see from what the Prophet *sallallâhu 'alayhi wa sallam* has informed us, that in the creation there is manifestation of Allâh's attributes of mercy, forgiveness, kindness etc etc. Allâh created man in paradise, they disobeyed Allâh, but Allâh had taught them how to repent, how to turn back to him and seek his forgiveness, then he would forgive them. Having done that, they were forgiven, Adam became the first prophet, and mankind was absolved of that sin. The story of Adam and Eve is the story of human existence. Human beings are given a consciousness of Allâh. When Allâh created all human beings, as he states in the *Qur'ân*, he took from Âdam (Adam) all of his descendents, and made them all bear witness that Allâh is their Lord. So we are all born with that consciousness. He has also given us a consciousness of what is right and what is wrong.

"We have inspired each and every soul to an awareness of corruption and righteousness."

Allâh gave revelation through his commandments, not to eat of the tree. However, human beings forget. And when they forget Allâh then they fall into sin. We can absolve ourselves of that sin by means of repentance, and Allâh forgives us when we repent sincerely. The Prophet *sallallâhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said;

"The one who repents is like the one without sin."

"If you did not commit sins and turn to Allâh seeking his forgiveness, then he would replace you with another people who would sin, ask Allâh's forgiveness and he would forgive them."

So in our sinning and asking Allâh's forgiveness, the attribute of Allâh's mercy and forgiveness becomes manifest. Allâh knew what we were going to do before he created us, he knew that he was creating a species who would sin. If he didn't wan t them to sin, if it was not his intention to permit them to sin, then he could have created angels, more angels. But the had already created angels, so

he chose to create a being, that would disobey his commandments through forgetfulness or just simple disobedience, but would turn back to him in repentance, and his attribute of forgiveness would become manifest. Similarly, his mercy;

The Prophet *sallallâhu 'alayhi wa sallam* is quoted as saying that when Allâh created the universe, He made an obligation on Himself, recorded in a document, kept by Him, that *"My mercy precedes my wrath."* He *sallallâhu 'alayhi wa sallam* also was reported as saying;

> *"Allâh created mercy with a hundred parts. One of which was sent down upon the jinn and human beings and other living creatures. It is out of this one part that they love each other, show kindness to one another, and even the animals treat their offspring with affection. Allâh has reserved the remaining ninety-nine parts for his true worshippers on the Day of Judgment."*

This is the mercy of Allâh manifest in his creation. What is also manifest in creation, in the act of creation, the creation of man, is his attribute of justice, fairness, which comes out as the judgment at the end of this world. I am sure we have all read the *ahadîth* in which the Prophet *sallallâhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said:

> *"Allâh created some people for hell and some people for paradise."*

For allot of people, this is something very heavy. And the companions, they asked the prophet *sallallâhu 'alayhi wa sallam* then what is the point in doing good deeds? If Allâh created some for heaven and some for hell then what is the pin in doing anything? It has already been decided. The Prophet *sallallâhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said:

> *"Each one of you will find it easy to do what he was created for."*

So if you choose the evil way, you find it easy and you carry on in that way, then that was what you were created for. But ultimately it is your choice. You choose hell. The fact hat Allâh has recorded, before anything was created, who would be in hell and who would be in heaven does not change the fact that it is we who choose. The judgment is only to manifest to those who go to hell, that they deserve to be in hell. It is only for them basically. Because if Allâh created you, and put you in paradise, with all that is in paradise, and you see those people in hell suffering, are you going to ask Allâh, why did you put me in paradise? No. your going to say "all praise be to Allâh!" you don't want to question or to wonder, all you will be is ecstatic that you are of those in paradise. So the judgment is not for you, it is for those who are going to hell. If you happen to be amongst those who were created for and put in hell, you would say, why me? Why did you put me in hell? And Allâh would say; because you would have done so and so in your life. But you would say; no, no I wouldn't. If you give me a chance I would do good deeds. You would not give up arguing.

So Allâh has allowed us to live out our lives. So when we stand before him, our book of deeds is spread before us, we know without a shadow of a doubt, that we chose hell. That Allâh's judgment is just. There is no injustice in it, in any way shape or form. Allâh says he oppresses no one. We will know that we chose hell.

And the only thing that remains for us, and I pray that it is not in fact us, who are going to hell, is to beg Allâh for another chance. Allâh says;

> **"If you cold only see when the sinners will bow their heads before their lord, saying; O Lord, we have now seen and heard, so send us back and we will do righteous deeds. Verily, we now believe with certainty."**

This is the only response, which will be left for them. Or as Allâh said;

> **"And those whose light scales of good deeds, they ruined themselves and they will be in hell eternally. The fire will burn their faces, and they will grin with disfigured lips, I will say to them; Were My Verses not recited to you, and you rejected them? They will reply; Our Lord, our misery overcame us and we were a people astray. Our Lord, bring us out of this, and if we ever return we will truly be unjust."**

When we die, there remains behind us a barrier, the *Barzakh*, none of us will come back, it is a one-way ticket. Those poor individuals who think they will get another chance, this is the new age religion, they think it is new, but it is just plain old *Hindu* delusion, that when you die, you get another chance to come back again. The effects of this actually, among *Hindus*, where I am in the UAE, there are a lot of *Hindus* here, everyday in the news paper you read about a *Hindu* man or woman who ties a rope to a ceiling fan, which is found in many of the homes, put it around their neck, kicked away the chair and passed out of this world. Suicide is common amongst them. Why? Because they think they have another chance. It will be a rude awakening for them when they meet the angel of death and find themselves in the next life, realizing that there is no coming back.

In the creation of man is manifest the grace of Allâh. This is a particular point which all of us should reflect on and be thankful to Allâh for. His grace, and Christians, they like to refer to us Muslims as those who don't believe in the grace of God, we are those who look at God's judgment and it is just about deeds, you do good then you go to heaven, you do bad and you go to hell, that is it, no grace there at all. For them the grace of God is there for all those who accept that he became a man, and was crucified by man, to provide salvation for human beings who's sins had become so great that they could not remove that sin through any act themselves. So it was with the spilling of the "Blood of God" that we could be absolved of our sins. For them, if you accept that God spilt his blood for mankind's salvation, then you have earned the grace of God. Does not matter what you do as long as you have accepted this belief in the grace of God.

Muslims also believe in the grace of God. Actually it plays a major and significant role. Often it is not stressed but it is important for us to realize how the grace of Allâh is manifest in our creation. The Prophet *sallallâhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said;

> *"Observe moderation, but if you fail, try to do as much as you can moderately and be happy. For none of you will enter Paradise only because of his deeds."*

Of course when the companions heard that they said;

> *"O messenger of Allâh, not even you? And the prophet sallallâhu 'alayhi wa sallam said, not even me. Were it not that Allâh wrapped me in his mercy. And bear in mind that the deed most loved by Allâh is one done constantly even if it is small"*

What does this mean? It means that God's grace is manifest in our lives in that were He to call us to account, one good deed, one evil deed, equal to each other, then we would not enter paradise, not even the prophets of Allâh. But Allâh through his grace and mercy has multiplied the value of the good deeds. Allâh says;

> **"Whoever brings a good deed, shall the value of ten like it. And whoever brings an evil deed will be punished with one like it. And they will not be wronged."** [*Sûrah* Âl-'Imrân, verse 160]

This is Allâh's grace. Good deeds erase evil deeds. One good deed will erase at least ten evil deeds.

Allâh's grace is not arbitrary, simply because you say I believe you have his grace, no matter what you do, no. The more good you do, the more of his grace is manifest in you. If you chose evil and reject the good, then you don't receive His grace, it doesn't matter what you say. If you say, I am a Muslim, I believe, but really you don't believe, it is just some words you are saying, them you will not be subject to the grace of Allâh.

So the creation is a manifestation of Allâh's attribute of being the creator. In the creation of man within the scheme of things, there is manifest Allâh's attribute of mercy, his attribute of justice and this is the reason for the creation of man from the point of view of Allâh. From human perspective, why did God create man in terms of for what purpose? Then this is the one we all know and are familiar with;

> **"We did not create the jinn and men except to worship us"** [*Sûrah* adh-Dhariyyat, verse 56)

So relative to Allâh, we were created in a means or a way in which Allâh has chosen to manifest his attributes of creation, mercy, grace etc and he could have chosen another one. But relative to us as human beings, we know that our purpose is to worship Allâh. As we said, Allâh does not need our worship, a Allâh didn't need to create. When he created us to worship him, he didn't create us, out of a need for our worship, because Allâh has no needs. In a famous *hadîth qudsî* in which Allâh says;

> *If all of you, jinn and mankind, were to worship like the most righteous amongst you, it would not increase the dominion of Allâh in any way shape or form. And if all of us, jinn and mankind ...*

Therefore when we look for the purpose of worship, we have to look into man. Allâh created us to worship him, because we need to worship him. It is something he has given us as a means of benefiting ourselves. We are the ones who benefit from it. Worship has been established, fundamentally for the growth, the spiritual growth of man. This growth takes place through the remembrance of Allâh. When you look at all the different aspects of worship, you will see the core of it is focused on the remembrance of Allâh.

> **"Establish the prayer for My remembrance."**

This is the essence for the consciousness of God. Allâh says that he has:

> **"...prescribed for us fasting, as he prescribed it for those before us, so that we may fear him."**

Worship is there for us to remember Allâh. And it is in the remembrance of Allâh, that we achieve that consciousness. Because it is when we forget Allâh, that Shaytân causes us to disobey Allâh and fall into sin. So it is only in His remembrance that we can attain salvation. All of the various acts of worship from saying "*Bismillâh*" when we eat is to help us remember Allâh in order to grow spiritually.

Allâh has said that he has created us to test us, to see which of us is best in deeds. He is not testing us to know, in the sense that he doesn't already know, but this world is a test for us in order again that we can grow spiritually.

We cannot develop this spiritual characteristic of generosity unless some of us have more then others and then we are required to give of the wealth we have. When we give, we grow. Similarly, if we were not in a position where others had more then us then we wouldn't have the ability to

develop the higher spiritual quality of contentment, patience, satisfaction in what Allâh has given us.

So it is all there in order to bring out the higher spiritual qualities, which enable us to attain the state, which makes us suitable and eligible to return to paradise. The paradise from which we were created, we were created in paradise and for paradise. Through our choices we have left, in this life, a field of testing, where we can grow to a state where we deserve paradise.

The purpose of this life is the worship of Allâh, this life is a test. A test for us, will we worship Allâh, or will we forget Him. This is where our focus has to begin.